

Message Text

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64

ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2883

UNCLAS PANAMA 0533

FOR ACKERMAN ARA/MGT

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: AFSP ALOW AORG

SUBJ: FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION PERSONNEL

1. REGIONAL OFFICE OF FHWA WAS ESTABLISHED IN CANAL ZONE IN MAY 1972 TO ADMINISTER CONSTRUCTION OF DARIEN GAP HIGHWAY WHICH WILL FORM PART OF THE INTER-AMERICAN HIGHWAY. PERSONNEL OF THAT OFFICE DISTINCT FROM THAT OF FHWA OFFICE IN PANAMA WHOSE PERSONNEL IS ATTACHED TO THIS DIPLOMATIC MISSION.

2. SINCE ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL OFFICE IN CANAL ZONE, ASSIGNED AMERICAN PERSONNEL HAVE OCCUPIED SIX SURPLUS LIVING UNITS BELONGING TO THE FEDERAL AVIATION AGENCY UNDER LETTER OF AGREEMENT DATED MAY 1, 1972. AGREEMENT PROVIDES FOR FHWA TO VACATE QUARTERS UPON 120-DAYS' NOTICE SHOULD FAA REQUIRE QUARTERS FOR ITS OWN PERSONNEL. IN ACCORDANCE THIS AGREEMENT FAA HAS REQUESTED RETURN OF FOUR SETS OF QUARTERS EITHER FROM FHWA OR FROM PAN CANAL WHICH HAS SOME FAA HOUSING UNDER SIMILAR AGREEMENT.

3. THERE ARE NO OTHER RESIDENTIAL QUARTERS IN CANAL ZONE WHICH CAN BE MADE AVAILABLE TO FHWA OR PAN CANAL PERSONNEL BEING DISPLACED BY FAA. THERE IS NO LEGAL BASIS FOR PAYING HOUSING ALLOWANCES TO PAN CANAL EMPLOYEES RESIDING IN REPUBLIC AND QUESTION HAS ARISEN
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WHETHER FHWA EMPLOYEES CAN TRANSFER RESIDENCY TO THE

REPUBLIC AND BE GRANTED A QUARTERS ALLOWANCE UNDER THE STANDARDIZED REGULATIONS (GOVERNMENT CIVILIANS, FOREIGN AREAS) WHILE CONTINUING TO WORK IN OFFICE LOCATED IN ZONE. FHWA PERSONNEL CURRENTLY ARE PAID DIFFERENTIAL APPLICABLE TO CIVILIAN EMPLOYMENT IN CANAL ZONE.

4. FURTHER QUESTION ARISES AS TO WHETHER RESIDENCY IN THE REPUBLIC OF FHWA REGIONAL PERSONNEL WOULD REQUIRE INCREASE IN THE OPRED CEILING FOR PANAMA.

5. WOULD APPRECIATE HAVING BUREAU COORDINATE ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS POSED IN 3 AND 4 ABOVE SOONEST.
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